(b) According to the Government of Karnataka they propose to raise Rs. 300 crores by floating Mahiti Bonds.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government of India.

Agreement to Boost Singapore's Software Industry

3593. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level delegation headed by him visited Singapore recently, and signed an agreement between the two countries to boost Singapore's software industry;

(b) if so, the details of discussion/outcome thereof;

(c) whether South-East Asia's larget exhibition/communications and IT event ""Communic Asia 2000" likely to be held in June, 2000 in Singapore; and

(d) if so, how many Indian Companies will be participating in this unique exhibition and likely benefits to India's growth in IT, expected therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) A high level delegation led by Minister of Information Technology visited Singapore during the period 28th March, 2000 to 31st March, 2000. the following areas have been agreed for cooperation in the area of communication and Information Technology:—

i. Electronics Commerce
ii. Information Security
iii. Electronic Governance
iv. Human Resource Development
v. Research, Design and Development
vi. Exploring third country markets particularly of South-East Asian countries.

In this context, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Governemnt of India and the Government of Singapore was signed to set up a Task Force in Information Technology for the purpose of strengthening bilateral cooperation in various areas of Information Technology.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Indian companies are expected to participate as per their perc ·'d benefits.

Action Plan to upgrade the Skill of Workers

3594. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) in view of the application of modern technology in the field of agriculture, buildings construction and forest employment, whether Government have any action plan to upgrade the skill of workers engaged in these areas, and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) The Directorate General of Employment & Training in the Ministry of Labour is the Apex Organisation responsible for Vocation Training Programmes at the National level. At present, there is no specific action plan to upgrade the skills of workers engaged in the field of Agriculture, buildings construction and forest employment. However, Craftsmen, Training Scheme (CTS) implemented through 4172 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIS) through out the country catering to the need to school leavers in different fields covering 67 trades provide skilled work force for various sectors of economy.

Training is also[imparted in 137 trades under the Apprenticeship Training Scheme (ATS). The training courses relevant to the areas of agriculture, buildings construction and forest employment under CTs and ATS are given in the statement. (see below)

Besides the above, "advanced training" is also imparted to upgrade the skill of the industrial workers in the fields of Welding and Refrigeration and Air-conditioning. For the benefit of women, training courses are also offered in the trades of Architectural Draftsmanship and Architectural Assistant.

Apart from the above, Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Indian Council of Agricultural Reseurch (ICAR), Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Rural Area and Employment and Ministry of Human Resources Development also conduct training programmes in the above mentioned sectors for the benefit of workers in the un-organised sector.